



Children and the Flu Vaccine—NEW for 2006-2007!

CDC recommends that healthy children aged 6 months up through their 5th birthday, their close contacts (people who live with them), and out-of-home caregivers (nannies, daycare providers, etc.) **should get a flu vaccine**. This expands last year's recommendation to *now include* vaccination for children 2 years old up to their 5th birthday this flu season.

In addition, CDC also recommends influenza vaccination for any child from 6 months to 18 years of age with chronic health problems, including:

- asthma or other problems of the lungs;
- immune suppression;
- chronic kidney disease;
- heart disease;
- HIV/AIDS
- diabetes;
- sickle cell anemia; or
- long-term aspirin therapy;
- any condition that can compromise respiratory function.

Children less than 2 years old are more likely to be hospitalized by flu.

Children less than 2 years old—even healthy children—are at high risk of ending up in the hospital if they get the flu. Vaccinating young children, their families, and other caregivers can help protect them from getting sick.

The flu shot is not approved for use in children less than 6 months old.

Children under 6 months old can also get very sick from the flu, but they are too young to get a flu vaccine.

The best way to protect young children is to make sure that their household members and their caregivers are vaccinated.

Children aged 2-5 years old have more doctor and emergency room visits.

Children 2-4 years old are likely to be taken to a doctor, an urgent care center, or the emergency room because of flu.

It is estimated that each year in the U.S., there are more than 20,000 children less than 5 years old hospitalized due to flu.

To protect their health, all children 6 months up until their 5th birthday should be vaccinated against the flu each year.

Children and Flu Vaccine—NEW for 2006-2007!

(continued from previous page)

When to get children vaccinated:

The best time to get vaccinated is October or November. Children six months to 9 years of age getting a flu shot **for the first time** will need two doses of vaccine the first year they are vaccinated, with the first dose ideally in September. The second dose should be given 28 or more days after the first dose. The first dose “primes” the immune system; the second dose provides immune protection. Keep this in mind if your child needs the two doses -begin the process early! It usually takes about two weeks after the second dose for protection to begin.

Because flu viruses change every year, the vaccine is updated annually. So even if you or your children got a flu shot last year, you both still need to get a flu shot this season to be protected. If October and November slip by, and you haven’t gotten your children or yourself vaccinated, you should get vaccinated in December or later. Flu season can occur anytime from November through April, so getting the vaccine in December or later still offers protection in most years.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/flu,
or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6348 (TTY).

November 06, 2006

Page 2 of 2